Jemmett

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SERMON

PREACH'D IN

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Chriſt-Church, DUBLIN,

On *Wedneſday* the 18th of DECEMBER, 1745.

Being the Day appointed for the

GENERAL FAST.

Before His EXCELLENCY

PHILIP Earl of *CHESTERFIELD*,
Lord Lieutenant General, and General Governor of *IRELAND*;

And the LORDS *Spiritual* and *Temporal* in Parliament Aſſembled.

By *JEMMET*, Lord Biſhop of *CORK* and *ROSS*.

Publiſhed by His EXCELLENCY's Special Command, and by Order of the Houſe of LORDS.

DUBLIN:

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Die Jovis 19° die Decembris 1745°.

IT is Ordered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament aſſembled, that the Thanks of this Houſe ſhall be, and are hereby given to the Lord Biſhop of Cork *and* Roſs, *for his Sermon preached before this Houſe Yeſterday at* Chriſt-Church, *and his Lordſhip is hereby deſired to Print and Publiſh the ſame.*

En. Sterne, *Cler' Parliamentor'.*

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SERMON

PREACH'D IN

Chriſt-Church, DUBLIN, *&c.*

ISAIAH V. 7.

Surely the vineyard of the LORD *of hoſts is the houſe of* Iſrael, *and the men of* Judah *are his pleaſant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, but behold a crying.*

THE prophet *Iſaiah* intending in this chapter to reprove the *Jews*, for their ingratitude to their gracious and almighty Protector, and to move them to a ſpeedy and exemplary repentance, by denouncing againſt them the terrible deſtruction that GOD would ſurely bring on them; in this parable of the vineyard, introduces GOD as expoſtulating with this people; ever diſtinguiſhed by his peculiar care; and appealing to themſelves, whether he could have done more for them than he did; and whether that profuſion as it were of bleſſings he had beſtowed on them, did not call for the higheſt returns of gratitude and obedience to ſo great a benefactor; and then, (as it was not to be denied, that they had provoked moſt highly this their gracious and

good GOD, by their open violation and contempt of all his laws; and the greateſt variety of abominations;) he proceeds, to pronounce a terrible ſentence indeed againſt them; that he would now, not only ceaſe to be their mighty Protector, and Deliverer; and ſo leave them to that puniſhment which muſt naturally follow from the ſtate of ſin and corruption, into which they had plunged themſelves; but that he would alſo take ſuch vengeance on this incorrigible and ungrateful people; as ſhould make them, as remarkable objects of his anger, as they had been of his favour and love: It was part of the buſineſs of thoſe prophets, inſpired by GOD, to call on the people to repent, and warn them of approaching judgments; they were commanded to lift up their voice as a trumpet; and to cry aloud, and ſpare not, — and it is as much the duty of the preſent Miniſters of the goſpel to denounce the heavy wrath and vengeance of GOD againſt impenitent ſinners. — 'Tis true, we cannot certainly foreſee future events, as the Prophets were enabled to do; but we know in general, as ſurely as they did, that the eternal anger of GOD is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and ſinfulneſs of men who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs, i. e. who profeſs the Chriſtian religion, and yet neglect its moſt important precepts. — And as to temporal puniſhments, they are often the natural and neceſſary conſequences of many ſins, eſpecially when they grow common and epidemical. — And if we cannot always determine any thing poſitively of ſuch effects, flowing from ſuch frightful cauſes; it is becauſe GOD is gracious and merciful; and how peremptory ſoever his threatnings are, there is always a reſerve for compaſſion on thorough repentance. — Give me leave then to expoſtulate freely and openly with you, concerning the various diſpenſations of providence towards us of theſe two kingdoms; and thoſe unequal and ungrateful returns we have made to them. — Certainly, this parable is but too applicable to our preſent circumſtances, in every reſpect, in GOD's manifold and repeated mercies to us, in our many and wilful corruptions, and in his unwillingneſs to caſt us from him. — Thus far our caſe is certainly but too like that of the *Jews*; and GOD grant, that a ſpeedy repentance may prevent the compleating of it; and that we may not prove like them, in the heavy judgments ſent from Heaven on their nations.

Therefore

Therefore in diſcourſing on theſe words, I ſhall in the firſt place endeavour to ſhew you, that our Church and nations have been as well as the *Jewiſh*, *the vineyard of the* LORD *of hoſts, and the people thereof his pleaſant plant*; and in the ſecond place, I fear that as among them ſo among us, it will appear, that *when he looked for judgment, behold oppreſſion, when for righteouſneſs, a crying*; and if ſo, I hope I ſhall not find it difficult in the third place to perſuade you, while yet you may, to prevent by immediate repentance, and amendment of life, the execution of that terrible ſentence, that was here paſſed, and has ſince been executed on that incorrigible people.

The many bleſſings and favours beſtowed on the *Jews* are recounted very particularly in the ſong of *Moſes*, in the 32d chapter of *Deuteronomy*, wherein he ſhews how GOD had ſingled them out from all nations to be his peculiar people; how he was emphatically ſtyled their LORD, and their GOD: how he had wrought for them a mighty deliverance, by a ſeries of viſible miracles; had condeſcended to be their immediate temporal governor; had given them poſſeſſion of a land flowing with milk and honey; and had uſed repeated methods, both of mercy and judgment, to reclaim them, and recover them to a ſenſe of gratitude, for all his wonders done among them. But notwithſtanding this, as it follows in the ſong, they waxed groſs and fat, and forgot the LORD who had done ſuch great things, provoking him to anger with their abominations: So that *Moſes* cries out, *O fooliſh people and unwiſe! do ye thus requite the* LORD *for all theſe things!*

Now which of theſe favours have not been in a remarkable manner vouchſafed to us of theſe nations? So that I may juſtly ſay to you as *Moſes* did to them; *Remember the days of old, conſider the years of many generations.* Aſk your fathers and they will ſhew you, — they will ſhew you, how the Moſt High delivered us out of worſe than *Egyptian* darkneſs, by an happy reformation of religion; brought about by methods plainly pointing out the finger of GOD, and the immediate operations of his providence: by that means freeing us from popiſh ignorance and innovations; from bowing down to ſtocks and ſtones and ragged relicks; from a grievous foreign Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, from a cruel and bloody perſecution,

perſecution, from more than heatheniſh ſuperſtition; into the genuine ſunſhine of the goſpel, the uncorrupted clear means of ſalvation; and the glorious liberty of the Sons of GOD. Conſider the time when we were not permitted the uſe of our reaſon, nay even of our ſenſes, in the moſt important concerns of life. When the Holy Scriptures were moſt ſacrilegiouſly detained from us by a generation of vipers, who forced us to ſwallow their abſurd doctrines and ridiculous legends and traditions, inſtead of the wholeſome precepts of the goſpel; and inſtead of the food of life gave us a Scorpion. Did not the popiſh Clergy in thoſe Days, (as they do now in countries ſubject to the Pope) trade with our perſons, our fortunes and our ſouls, and ſell them and their own too, as *Solomon* ſays, for a piece of bread? Did not theſe locuſts, as numerous and deſtructive as thoſe of *Egypt*, devour all the ſubſtance of the land, and engroſs all its riches to their monaſteries; where they wallowed in lazineſs, and luxury, and vice; and never came forth but to abuſe the zealous and tender conſciences of millions, who if rightly inſtructed might have become great examples of true Chriſtian piety. In ſhort, we were not only reformed from a falſe and hypocritical pretence of holineſs, to ſincere virtue and religion, and to a pure and primitive worſhip; but many remarkable temporal bleſſings followed this reformation; a wondrous increaſe of all arts and ſciences, of politeneſs and decency, of trade and riches, of power and influence, of uniformity in diſcipline and worſhip; and a ſettled peace and proſperity; notwithſtanding the repeated endeavours both of force and treachery, which all the popiſh powers inceſſantly uſed to introduce their ſuperſtition again. All their plots laid with the moſt exquiſite art, and carried on with the darkeſt ſecrecy, were diſcovered; all their invaſions defeated, and all the attempts that their unwearied zeal and malice could ſuggeſt were confounded; and we continued for many years a flouriſhing people. Till at laſt we grew groſs and fat with bleſſings, and wanted another calamity to rouſe and puniſh us, at which time a very juſtifyable oppoſition being given to ſome ill adviſed meaſures of the court, it was ſoon laid hold on, and carried immediately much further, than thoſe watchful guardians of the national liberty who began it ever intended; they reſolved, as became them, to oppoſe what ſeemed to them dangerous

gerous to the conſtitution, by thoſe methods, which had been in the wiſe frame thereof provided againſt ſuch attempts: But this was ſoon out of their power, and the buſineſs intirely wreſted out of their hands, for at this time ſuch a ſpirit of murmuring and rebellion, of ſtrife and ſedition, of wild enthuſiaſm and ſchiſm, of cant and jargon in religion broke in upon us, which ſoon overwhelmed both Church and State; enabled the moſt execrable hypocrites and rebels to murder their King, and to tyrannize moſt rapaciouſly and cruelly over their fellow ſubjects of theſe kingdoms; but when we had ſmarted for ſome time, under this diſmal and cruel ſcourge; and our religion, liberties and properties lay gaſping under the iron Scepter of an audacious tyrant; GOD in his own time was pleaſed, to turn the hearts of a diſobedient people, and in manner, and by means, to this day not to be accounted for, to reſtore our church and conſtitution, by reſtoring the King: but alas, we were not worthy to have the bleſſing compleat, for the King brought with him from baniſhment, as deep a tincture of Popery, and fatal liking to arbitrary power; both which he endeavoured to introduce, by incouraging the greateſt degeneracy of morals, and entire indifference to all religion; the only method by which that enſlaving deadly project can be brought about. Then, what we were with the utmoſt difficulty preſerved from, under that reign of corruption, King *James* the 2d, againſt his moſt ſolemn coronation oath to the contrary, openly attempted; and declaring himſelf a *Papiſt*, claimed to be above Law, and drove on furiouſly to undo and be undone. Many here have ſeen and all of us feel the happy effects of GOD's wonderful interpoſition in the late glorious revolution; in the time of our diſtreſs, when our popiſh enemies were in the height of their pride, and inſolence, under a bigotted King of their own religion, ſupported by Princes of the ſame faith; and began to trample on our necks, and ſay to themſelves, ſo would we have it, down with them even to the ground; did not our merciful GOD, as the prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks in the like caſe, raiſe up a man from the eaſt, call him to his foot, and give the nations before him. *The Iſles ſaw it and feared, and every man ſaid to his Brother, be of good cheer, this is he, who hath wrought and done it: I the Lord, the firſt and the laſt, I am he. Fear not, thou worm* Jacob, *and ye men of* Iſrael,

Iſrael, *I will help thee ſaith the* LORD. And in fact, were we not then put into the quiet poſſeſſion of greater civil and religious liberty; more ſecure and ſettled property; more clear and wholeſome Laws; and a better regulated free government than we ever enjoyed before; and were not all theſe noble priviledges procured by means ſeemingly very unequal to our enemy's force; and by circumſtances which plainly ſhewed that human ſtrength had little ſhare in the event? and then, to confirm and to ſecure theſe bleſſings of Providence, our gracious deliverer King WILLIAM, of ever glorious memory, made the ampleſt proviſion, by the ſettlement of the Crown of theſe realms on the auguſt proteſtant houſe of *Hanover*.—And after all this, did not almighty GOD, in our memories, proſper our arms in a wonderful manner againſt a mighty and dangerous tyrant, who threatned all *Europe* with ſlavery, and theſe kingdoms with an *abjured popiſh pretender?* Did he not then fight our battles under the proſperous reign of a woman, till the fame of our courage and council reached the ends of the earth; and till we once more became to him for a name, for a praiſe and for a glory; and till we might have humbled the proud tyrant of the earth, had we uſed thoſe advantages it pleaſed GOD to give us, by ſecuring to ourſelves, and to all *Europe*, peace and quiet not to be diſturbed by that power, that like the grave is never ſatisfied with deſtruction. After this, did not the ſame providence by the ſeaſonable acceſſion of our late great and good King, again reſcue us from the dreadful effects of the deep ſchemes of men in power, to overturn the ſucceſſion in the auguſt houſe of *Hanover*; on which depended all the ſecurity we could have for our religion, liberty and Laws; was not this ſettlement afterwards preſerved by the ſame providence amidſt a dangerous rebellion, and do we not ſtill happily enjoy all our rights and our religion, under a gracious Monarch of the ſame houſe, who is ever ready to promote to the utmoſt of his power the welfare of his ſubjects, to redreſs their wrongs at home, and to revenge their injuries abroad. And now, may not our church and nations ſo cheriſhed, ſo protected, ſo inriched with bleſſings from Heaven, be properly called the Vineyard of the LORD of Hoſts, and the people thereof his pleaſant plant; has not the Almighty alſo hedged them in with a mighty boundary

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the ocean, to protect them from their natural foreign enemies; placed them in a fertile Soil, dreſſed and cultivated with his own hand, and watered it plentifully with the dew of Heaven; has he not ſupplied this his beloved vineyard, with all the neceſſaries and comforts of life, and in ſuch abundance, as to be able to furniſh the remoteſt corners of the earth, with what they want, and thence to bring back all the various productions of art and nature?

I come now in the ſecond place to enquire, whether as among the *Jews*, ſo among us, this LORD of our vineyard *when he looked for judgment, found oppreſſion, when for righteouſneſs a crying.* — It would take up too much of my time here, to enumerate thoſe particular abominations of the *Jews*, which rendered them ſo offenſive to him, and a diſgrace to him in the eyes of the nations; but every man who has read the hiſtorical part of the Bible and the Prophets, muſt acknowledge, that amidſt all the divine favours, they proved a perverſe, rebellious and wicked generation: Till at laſt they were rooted out from the face of the earth, and were no more a people or a nation, and to this day remain a laſting monument of GOD's vengeance on a people who would not liſten to his mercies or judgments.—To form a juſt notion of their villainous ingratitude, we need only look at the third verſe of this chapter, where we ſee GOD himſelf expoſtulating with his Jewiſh vineyard, and aſking what more he could have done to it than he had? and yet when he reaſonably expected it ſhould have brought forth Grapes, wherefore brought it forth wild Grapes? never did people ſo ſpurn at their maker, ſo defile themſelves with abominations, and ſo obſtinately abuſe the long-ſuffering and forbearance of GOD.

Now to ſhew you this part of the parable to be as applicable to us as the former, is no doubt a harſh and an ungrateful task. But at this time, when mighty dangers threaten us; when the divine ballance ſeems equally poized; and we know not yet whether the Scale of mercy or juſtice will prevail: And ſince it muſt unavoidably happen, that in publick and national judgments, the innocent and guilty muſt ſuffer alike, and be involved in the ſame common calamities; we ought in mercy to our ſelves, to recollect and recount the kinds at leaſt of theſe heinous and reigning Sins for which our Land ſhould mourn. They are indeed ſo notorious, that none, who make any obſervations on times and things, can poſſibly overlook them.

Suppoſe then that the great governor of the world ſhould ſend down his angel (as in the caſe of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*) to take a view of theſe kingdoms, would he not diſcern many ſcenes of injuſtice and oppreſſion? would not the cries of orphans, the widow and the poor come up before him; who are undone by thoſe who labour to raiſe their fortunes and their families; who reſolve to be rich; who add field to field by legal frauds, or open force or circumvention; and who live like beaſts of prey only by devouring their underlings! and were ever good laws more neglected or often more partially perverted? and ſhall not the GOD of juſtice viſit for theſe things?

Was there ever in theſe unhappy nations a greater contempt of every thing ſerious, decent, and commendable? a greater neglect among ſubjects of all government in Church and State; a more open diſcontent and murmuring; and a ſtronger tendency to throw off all rule, and to run into confuſion and diſtraction? are not ſelfiſhneſs, private intereſt, narrow principles, and mean or wicked ſchemes to be met with, almoſt wherever we go? and ſhall not the GOD of order viſit for theſe things?

Was there ever among us a more ſhameful and unnatural neglect of the education of children, or the inſtruction of ſervants, in reſpect to moral and religious principles; at a time too, when the corruptions all around them call for the greateſt care and guard of mankind? or can there be a more manifeſt danger from hence, of our running into a race of the moſt profligate wretches on the globe? are not the common people among us become very vicious? are not the children of moſt of the Nobility and Gentry brought up in ignorance, pride, vanity, foppery, and all the empty accompliſhments of a falſe and vicious taſte? and will not GOD viſit thoſe ſins of the fathers upon the children, in the natural courſe of things, to the third and fourth generation?

Is not the *Sabbath Day* ſcandalouſly prophaned by multitudes; who turn it into a ſeaſon of all ſorts of riot, vice and debauchery; and by others who ſpend the greateſt ſhare of that day in impertinence, idleneſs, and viſits; inſtead of improving themſelves and their families in virtue and religion? do we obſerve even one of the laws made to prevent this ſhameful contempt of the LORD's day, properly executed by thoſe magiſtrates who are appointed guardians of the *Sabbath?* and will not the LORD of the *Sabbath* viſit for theſe things? Are not drunkenneſs, and intemperance, pernicious luxury and extravagance, become the main de-

lights and ſtudy of multitudes; who emulate each other, and pride themſelves in waſting their time, their health, and their fortunes in theſe deſtructive vanities; are they abated even now, at a ſeaſon when the miſerable condition of great numbers cry aloud for charity out of their ill employed ſuperfluities, when the great decay of trade and other accidents of war has made ſuch a number of objects of compaſſion; nay when the low eſtate of theſe kingdoms, and the dangers that threaten them, require a general frugality and œconomy to retrieve and ſupport them? And will not that GOD who ſuffereth not the expectation of the poor to periſh, viſit for theſe things?

Are not the moſt ſhocking oaths, and execrable curſes, every day ſounding in our ears and vented in expreſſions, bordering even on blaſphemy itſelf? do we not hear even children, liſping out this helliſh and frightful dialect? and do we find a ſingle endeavour, by a proper execution of the laws, to curb theſe monſtrous and inſupportable inſults upon GOD? in ſhort, ought not our land to mourn becauſe of curſing? and ſhall not the inſulted Majeſty of Heaven and earth be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?

Have not uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs, fornication and adultery, ſo ſhamefully prevailed among us, (eſpecially among the higheſt and loweſt ranks in and about our great cities) as to paſs for faſhionable and genteel gallantry; and to bid open defiance to the laws of GOD and man? do not men glory in their infamous conqueſts of this ſort? are not ſuch entertainments, and diverſions, and faſhions of behaviour introduced in theſe nations, as directly tend to leſſen, or baniſh all guard of modeſty from the female ſex? is not the proſtitution of women in our great cities ſo remarkably ſcandalous, as to raiſe the indignation and reſentment of all ſober obſervers? are there not ſwarms of infected wretches ſpreading their contagion in every corner, without ſhame, or puniſhment? do not all thinking people juſtly dread, from hence a feeble and depraved offſpring, to fill up the enſuing age? are not the peace of families, the ſacred property of the marriage bed, the bodies and ſouls of children violated by theſe abominable practices? and will not the GOD of all purity, that GOD who judges whoremongers and adulterers, be avenged for ſuch flagrant crimes as theſe? Laſtly, is not the richeſt bleſſing that man could receive, or GOD beſtow, and which, coſt the life of his only begotten Son; is not I ſay the Chriſtian religion it ſelf openly treated with ridicule and

contempt, both in print and converſation; and this in a chriſtian country, and under a chriſtian government? and is there any people, or government in the univerſe beſides, who would ſuffer ſuch bold inſults, even upon a falſe eſtabliſhed religion? do not numbers among us obſtinately reject the glorious ſunſhine of the goſpel, and ſet up the dim, glimmering light of their miſtaken reaſon and giddy imaginations againſt it? are not prophaneneſs and infidelity, deiſm and atheiſm, free thinking in ſpeculation, and libertiniſm in practice, propagated in ſhoals of pamphlets, and induſtriouſly infuſed into young and weak minds? is it not notorious, that great art is uſed to diffuſe theſe horrid principles? and is not their dreadful infection ſpreading widely every day; to the manifeſt deſtruction of all order, decency, ſobriety, virtue and religion; and to the incouragement of all ſorts of diſorder, and corruption and vice? and is not the beautiful and uniform face of chriſtianity among us, which ought to be without ſpot or wrinkle, deformed with ſects, and mangled with ſchiſms and hereſies? and will not the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the LORD of Chriſtianity viſit for theſe heinous ſins? and ſhall not his ſoul be avenged of ſuch nations as theſe? in ſhort 'tis not to be concealed,—there is a univerſal depravity crept in among us; the laws of GOD and man are deſpiſed; and we hardly want any ingredients to fill up the meaſure of our iniquities, unleſs it be open rebellion and maſſacres, — the one already is begun, and how far we may be from the other, GOD only knows. And may I not now ask, whether thoſe crimes I have recounted are a proper return to GOD, for the many ſignal favours, bleſſings and protections he has afforded us? have we been delivered to do all theſe abominations? it is reaſonable that looking for judgment, he ſhould find oppreſſion, when for righteouſneſs a crying? do ye thus requite the LORD ye fooliſh people? is it reaſonable that this vineyard of the LORD of hoſts, and this vine that his own right hand had planted, dreſſed and protected with ſo much care, ſhould thus have brought forth wild grapes? I come now in the third place to endeavour to perſuade you (while yet you may) to prevent by immediate repentance and amendment of life, the execution of the terrible ſentence that GOD paſſed, and has ſince been executed on that incorrigible people.

The threats which GOD every where denounces againſt this obſtinately wicked people are indeed very terrible; in this chapter he plainly tells them, ſtill ſpeaking in the language of the parable, that he would *take away the hedge thereof*

thereof, and it ſhould be eaten up, and broken down, the wall thereof and it ſhould be throdden down i. e. he would withdraw his protection from their Church and nation, and then their natural and inveterate enemies would utterly deſtroy it, and make it deſolate; ſurely this is a ſentence ſufficient to fill any nation with the utmoſt horror, whoſe ſins bear any proportion, to the ſins of this people; but in the remainder of this chapter, the woes denounced againſt them are ſtill more fully and particularly deſcribed; indeed all the writings of the prophets are full of continual warnings to theſe people, and in the moſt emphatical and affecting ſtrain deſcribe the terrors of the LORD as ready to be inflicted on this diſobedient generation; they all declare that GOD would no longer have pity, nor ſpare, nor have mercy but deſtroy them; for *that they would not hear, but walked in the imagination of their hearts; that he had ſeen their adulteries, and their neighings; the lewdneſs of their whoredoms and their abominations, and that they ſhould no longer be a people nor a nation*; how often in the midſt of all theſe threats of terrible vengeance does GOD ſhew his unwillingneſs to deſtroy if they would but repent? how often does he break out into this tender and paſſionate exclamation—*woe unto thee O Jeruſalem? wilt thou not be clean? when ſhall it once be?*

The application of theſe threatnings to our preſent circumſtances, is too diſmal a ſcene for me to paint or you to view.—We have but one ſingle method in our power to avoid theſe terrible penalties; a deep ſorrow for our Sins paſt, and thorough reformation of life; GOD is willing to pardon, if we will but repent, and methinks, I ſtill hear him ſpeaking to us and ſaying to us, *your provocations, O ye ſinful people, have filled my vials full of wrath; behold, my arrows are on the ſtrings, and my thunderbolt is in my hand*; 'but is there never a *Moſes* to ſtand in the 'gap, nor a *Phineas* to riſe up and pray? is there never an *Abraham* to 'plead for a ſiſter of *Sodom*, nor a prieſt to weep out betwixt the 'porch and the Altar? is there never a man of wiſdom among you 'to hear my voice, how long and audibly ſoever I have been crying 'unto you. O come and ſtop me in my full career of puniſhing: Let 'your tears diſarm me, and your prayers bind my hands; I am Almighty, but I am all mercy too, and tho' ye cannot reſiſt, ye may prevent me:' let us therefore turn to the Lord with humility and repentance, and with faſting and with weeping and with mourning to our GOD, for he will abundantly pardon.'—And to this purpoſe it is that we are here

this

this day aſſembled, by the pious commands of our King, (and after the example of GOD's Church in all times of diſtreſs) to confeſs and heartily lament the crying ſins of theſe nations, to deprecate GOD's anger and vengeance ſo juſtly deſerved by us, to implore his aſſiſtance to ſubdue his Majeſty's enemys abroad, and to cruſh this unnatural rebellion at home. —In all ages good men have been deeply afflicted for the ſins of others, as well as their own; and indeed he muſt be a very bad one, who can ſee a ſinful perſon or people haſt'ning to deſtruction temporal and eternal, without wiſhing to prevent it; we ſee *Jeremiah* and *Daniel* and *Ezra* remarkably lamenting the ſins of their people and nation; and truly I doubt not but we ſhall readily acknowledge alſo the iniquity of theſe nations to be very great; (for really it can not be denyed) nay that we are very ſorry for it, and wiſh a ſpeedy ſtop may be put to it; and I dare ſay we ſhall all be ready enough to cenſure many as remarkable inſtances of it; and accuſe them of having contributed to the calamities of our country; and ſhall be zealouſly bent on any publick reforming Scheme;—but all this while we forget that theſe nations are made up of individuals, and that the only way to reform the whole, is for each man to begin, and reform himſelf; we do not attend to what is properly our own buſineſs, and of the utmoſt importance to us, and to that part of the work, where with GOD's aſſiſtance we cannot fail; the looking into our own hearts, and there making diligent ſearch and ſincere inquiry, how far we have contributed to the increaſe of this national and deadly diſeaſe—this *Solomon* adviſes to be done by every particular perſon, on any occaſion of ſolemn humiliation and national repentance; *that prayer and ſupplication be made by all the people of* Iſrael, *who ſhall know every man the plague of his own heart*; then ſays he, *hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place and forgive*; particular perſons muſt be convinced of their perſonal tranſgreſſion, and forſake them, before GOD will hear the prayers and forgive the ſins of a nation.—And therefore, to anſwer in any degree the ends of this national humiliation and repentance; we muſt firſt look into ourſelves, and ſincerely ſearch our deceitful hearts; and then I fear we ſhall all find, that on account of our own perſonal ſins, as well as for the ſins of the Nation, we ought to humble ourſelves before the tremendous Majeſty of Heaven; to acknowledge his great mercy and goodneſs to us in an infinite variety of inſtances, and our vileneſs and ingratitude for all the wonders of his love vouchſafed unto us, and conſequently our unworthineſs of the continuance of his favour and protec-

tion; and at which time we muſt be forced to confeſs the great ſhare we have had in that national guilt, that calls ſo juſtly and ſo loudly for vengeance. Except we begin in this manner, we are here this day, in GOD's preſence, acting a moſt abominable farce, we again affront our highly offended God, and inſult him by our ſolemn hypocriſy, a ſin, againſt which throughout the whole bible the heavieſt woes are denounced; except this be firſt done, this neceſſary reformation of the whole is not to be effected; and he that refuſes in this manner to contribute to the ſafety of his country, is the worſt of traytors. But this we cannot do here in as particular a manner, as the diſmal circumſtances we are in require; we ſhould therefore, before we came to this place, have humbled ourſelves before GOD, acknowledge and bewail the iniquities of theſe nations, and our own particular Sins, in which we ſhould be as minute and circumſtantial as poſſible, and not deceiving ourſelves, but repreſenting them to GOD with all the aggravating circumſtances that have attended them, particularly marking and bewailing our extraordinary guilt, where we have by our pernicious example, or otherwiſe, been the occaſion of the ſin and ruin of others; and where we have not uſed our beſt endeavours and influence to diſcourage, and check the increaſe of impiety and wickedneſs among our friends and companions; and then when our ſouls have been truly humbled with a deep ſenſe of our wilful ſins, we ſhould proſtrate ourſelves before GOD, and through the merits of his ſon JESUS CHRIST, earneſtly implore the aſſiſtance of his grace and holy ſpirit, to amend our lives; and enable us by our example, and every other method in our power, to promote and help forward that reformation of theſe nations, which can only avert his judgment, and intitle them to his protection: then in this ſolemn aſſembly, we ſhall grievouſly and effectually lament the national guilt, of which this previous meditation has made us ſenſible; and ſhall more thoroughly bewail our own weakneſs and inſufficiency, and deteſt our own wickedneſs, which this ſerious inquiry into our own conduct has convinced us of: we ſhall then, from a deep ſenſe of GOD's goodneſs, and our ingratitude, ſincerely acknowledge that we no longer deſerve the continuance of his favour and protection, and that it is owing to his abundant mercy, that we are not utterly conſumed: we ſhall then in all humility of ſoul confeſs, that we depend on him, for all bleſſings ſpiritual and temporal; that without him, we are not able to think one good thought, and that ſhould he withdraw his protection from us,

we

we muſt be undone, and be no more a people; and yet, that we are not worthy to ask any thing from him, but in the name, and through the merits, of his only begotten Son JESUS CHRIST, our Mediator, Saviour and Redeemer: and then in his name, and for his ſake, we may venture to approach the throne of mercy, and deprecate the wrath of GOD; intreat him to have pity on this people, to turn us from our iniquities, and heal the land; firmly reſolving every one of us, humbly confiding in his aſſiſtance, ſincerely to endeavour the reformation of ourſelves and our country. Then, and not till then, may we preſume he will hear our prayers, give us time to prove the ſincerity of our hearts, defer executing the ſentence we deſerve, by once again appearing in our cauſe, and by bleſſing the councils and arms of our King, defend us from the rage and malice of our inveterate enemies abroad; and from the dreadful conſequences of this unnatural rebellion at home: and when we return from the ſolemn ſervice of the Church, if we are ſincere in our holy reſolutions, we ſhall retire to our cloſets, and there renew our repeated vows of amendment; there again proſtrate ourſelves before GOD, implore the countenance of his Grace and Holy Spirit, to perfect thoſe good purpoſes he has inſpired us with, and there offer up our prayers for ourſelves and our country; and beg we may have the honour to be his inſtruments in ſaving theſe nations from ruin and perdition, by contributing every way in our power to the reformation of them: by this means the ends of this ſolemn Faſt will be anſwered, and not loſt in that general repentance, which commonly ends with the ſervice of the Church, where moſt people leave their ſorrows behind them, and return home with the ſame affections for their luſts they ever had: and to all theſe holy penitential exerciſes, we muſt be ſure to add charity to the poor. We can only break off our ſins by repentance, and our iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor; they are particularly GOD's care at all times, and therefore he requires it indiſpenſably of us, that we never preſume to intreat his favour without lending our aſſiſtance to ſupply their wants, whom he is pleaſed to make his peculiar care; he plainly tells that *he that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the* LORD, *and look what he layeth out it ſhall be payed him again*; and where can we have ſuch a ſecurity for principal and intereſt, as he offers us; in ſhort, if we will have our prayers aſcend up to Heaven, our alms muſt go with them; this the angel intimates to *Cornelius* when he tells him, *that his alms and his prayers were gone up as a memorial before* GOD; but now it is a duty highly

incumbent

incumbent on us as we are likely to have great variety of objects, to exerciſe our charity on, occaſioned by the many, accidents which muſt unavoidably flow from the foreign and civil war we are ingaged in—could we but be prevailed on to perſevere in the holy and generous reſolution, which I hope we have this day entered into, we ſhould find ſoon we had joined in the moſt noble, loyal and effectual aſſociation, for the preſervation of our King and conſtitution—for it would not be a very difficult, and might be a very uſeful taſk, if the time would allow me, to ſhew you, that all ſin whatever has a natural tendency to bring great evils on a nation; but I cannot avoid obſerving (as every perſon who has ſeriouſly conſidered the courſe and tendency of human actions muſt) that of late years, ſuch vices and corruptions have prevailed in theſe nations, as if not checked, muſt neceſſarily bring on great and publick calamities; without expecting them as a puniſhment from God: How can a nation long ſubſiſt where luxury, infidelity prophaneneſs and faction prevail? theſe are our moſt dangerous foes, they are a canker in our ſtate, and eat the vitals of it, and theſe our enemies by all ſubtle policy have fomented; and on their ſucceſs they only ground their hopes of deſtroying that glorious conſtitution in Church and ſtate, that while it remains uncorrupted, muſt ever effectually ſtop the enſlaving projects of *Rome* and her aſſociates; and I fear their refined ſchemes have greatly ſucceeded, or elſe they would never have dared to think of invading our country, forcing us to accept of an abjured bigot for our Prince, and that intollerable yoke of popery and arbitrary power, which our fore-fathers reſcued us from at the expence of ſo much blood and treaſure; but they no longer conſider us, as that brave proteſtant people, that oppoſed the tyranny of *Rome* and her Princes; but as corrupted and enervated by luxury and ſloth; thro' faction deſtroying one another, and ever ready to ſacriffice the publick good to the gratification of our paſſions, our luſts, or our humours; and prepared by infidelity, prophaneneſs, and a general indifference to religious concerns; to profeſs that religion againſt which we are continually exclaiming; they juſtly conclude, that he who has no religion will profeſs any; and are too refined politicians, not to know how to make a good convert of him to their ſuperſtition, who has no objection to it on religious motives; they promiſe and will confirm all preſent poſſeſſions, grant new favours, and laviſhly bribe every appetite, paſſion and fancy; and will be modeſtly contented if they cannot on better terms, to get her admitted even naked among

us; depending on her own induſtry, ſoon to cloath herſelf in gorgeous ſcarlet apparel;—but perhaps they are miſtaken, and that the number of thoſe among us, who have flung off all ſenſe of religion, is not as great as they conclude it to be: yet I ſtill fear they will think themſelves likely to ſucceed among ſuch, as are openly lewd and prophane, and who, tho' they do not abſolutely deny GOD, and the revelation of his ſon in words; yet do it in their lives; by acting contrary to all natural and revealed religion; for where can ſuch be ſo quieted and ſoothed in their vices as in the Church of *Rome*, whereas, we have not ſo learned Chriſt; we muſt declare that without actual holineſs, no man can ſee GOD; but the more knowing and more dextrous popiſh caſuiſt can at a pinch ſupply them with a variety of ſhifts to elude the neceſſity of practical holineſs; then in the article of death, I believe they expect great ſucceſs, when a poor expiring wretch who has lived in the open defiance of GOD's laws, and has withſtood all his proffered grace, is now on the brink of eternity, and like a drowning man who catches at a ſtraw, is ready to cloſe with any dazling ſcheme of comfort; then, a dexterous jugler, practiſed in all the various ſchemes of deceit, and confidence, ſhall perſuade this poor mortal (who has all his life withſtood all the means of rational conviction) all at once to profeſs himſelf a convert to the idolatry and ſuperſtition of the Church of *Rome*; and then in ſuch victories as theſe, theſe champions glory, and publiſh them abroad; and thereby inſnare the children and dependents of theſe unhappy perſons, greatly magnifying this miracle of GOD's grace vouchſafed in ſo remarkable a manner to theſe holy and exemplary penitents; and all theſe things they dreſs up with every circumſtance and conſequence that may beſt ſerve their purpoſes; but they are ſure always to proclaim confidently, that with the aſſiſtance of the prayers and merits of their Church, this deluded perſon, has attoned and compounded for a life of ſenſuality and prophaneneſs.

The dangers that are juſtly to be feared, in a country where luxury and faction prevail muſt be ſo apparent, eſpecially to this auguſt audience, that for that reaſon, I hope it will be ſufficient to have ſlightly mentioned them, and I am well aſſured could we be but prevailed on to try the experiment; to baniſh pernicious luxury with its calamitous train; and to diſcourage faction under all its goodly pretences; we ſhould ſoon ſee our country and conſtitution reſtored to ſuch a degree of ſtrength, and vigour, as would demonſtrate, that the diſtreſſes and evils it now labours

under

under are principally owing to the incouragement they both have met with.

Let us then act as men, at this important juncture, when our country loudly calls for our aid; let us act as men truly ſenſible of, and thankful for the bleſſings we enjoy; as inſpired with a true chriſtian principle of benevolence to our country; and determined to promote its true intereſt at the hazard of our lives and fortunes: let us offer up our vices and our paſſions, as a ſacrifice for it; let us retain in private as well as expreſs in publick, our continual dependance on GOD for all our bleſſings; and never ceaſe putting up our prayers to him, that he would not deliver us into the hands of thoſe whoſe tender mercies are cruel, but that he would ſave us from our enemies, and put them to confuſſion that hate us; let us be ſure to take him into all our councils, and never for the proſpect of the greateſt good, do what we think may be diſpleaſing to him; let us be thankful for, but not too much elated with, any dawn of ſucceſs he is pleaſed to open to us; and on the other hand, let us not be confounded, if our enemies ſhould get ſome advantages of us; he may permit men of deſperate fortunes, to embroil a kingdom, to puniſh the Sins thereof; but if they will repent and amend, and make the continuance of that chaſtiſement no longer neceſſary; in a moment *Architophel* is catched in the crafty wilineſs that he has imagined; and the next oath can deliver us from the deluded and daring *Abſolom*: I have in this diſcourſe declined any endeavours to animate you to a defence of that religion and conſtitution, that is now attempted to be torn from us, by the unnatural confederacy of our fellow ſubjects, with the ſworn foes of theſe nations, by endeavouring to make you ſenſible of the ineſtimable value of them; from a true deſcription of them; firſt, becauſe I am ſpeaking in an aſſembly, where they muſt be ſo greatly valued, becauſe they are ſo thoroughly underſtood; ſecondly, becauſe I am ſenſible I ſhould fail in the attempt, and ſhould be as unable to paint them, in that charming attracting light they ought to ſtand in; as to deſcribe the bleſſings of vigorous health which can only be felt; nor have I on the other hand, for the ſame reaſon drawn any arguments, from a deſcription of that miſery, that muſt be the inevitable conſequence of our being deprived of theſe bleſſings; and alſo, becauſe it would be too ſhocking a ſcene, and not very proper for this place, to deſcribe to you that amazing variety of torture and wretchedneſs that would be practiſed on us, ſhould we for our ſins be

delivered

delivered into the hand of our enemies, who are ſkilful to deſtroy; let us, in the name of GOD, if we love ourſelves, our ſouls, our bodies, our country, our religion, our liberties and laws, our wives and our children, our parents, relations, and friends; in ſhort, if we love every thing that ought to be valued by us in this world and the next; let us reſolve to part with our vices and ſins; while our gracious and good King, and thoſe who are in authority under him, are vigorous in purſuing the neceſſary meaſures for our ſafety, let every one of us forſake our ſins, and pray for all others; and thus all national vices will vaniſh. In ſhort, let us bid defiance to our ſins, and then we may bid defiance to our enemies; will we not be made clean? when ſhall it once be?

'Tis too apparent from what has been ſaid, that we have not a moment to looſe, this neceſſary reformation of manners.— The ſcale is almoſt full; and a very little addition of guilt may turn the fatal ballance.—Let us then turn ſpeedily to GOD, in faſting and mourning, and praying that he would once more look down from Heaven, and viſit his vineyard and his vine, that his own right hand has planted, that the wild boar may not root it up, nor the wild beaſts of the field devour it; but that he will hedge it round with his protection, cultivate and water it, that it may not bring forth any more wild grapes. — And now if our ſouls are truly humbled with this review of the melancholy ſtate of our affairs; let us with the heartieſt compunction, join in theſe words, which the ſpirit of GOD has dictated; that GOD whom we have ſo much reſiſted and deſpiſed.

O LORD GOD, *merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands; forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion and ſin.*

We acknowledge, O LORD, *our own wickedneſs, and the iniquities of our Fathers. Our tranſgreſſions are multipled, and our ſins teſtify againſt us. We are all an unclean thing, and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away: we are altogether become abominable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holineſs and thy glory. Where is thy zeal and thy ſtrenth? the ſounding of thy bowels, and thy mercies towards us? Haſt thou utterly rejected us; and hath thy ſoul loathed our Zion?

But now, O LORD, *thou art our Father; we are the clay, and the work of thy hand;—be not wrath very ſore, O* LORD, *neither remember iniquities for ever. O* LORD *hear, O* LORD *forgive, O* LORD *hearken, and defer not; for we are called by thy name; ſpare thy people, O* LORD, *and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the heathen ſhould rule over us, leſt they ſay, where is now their* GOD?

Remove far from us, the northern army, and drive him into a land barren and deſolate; with his face towards the eaſt ſea, and his end to the utmoſt ſea, and let his ſtink come up, and his corruption aſcend, becauſe he hath exalted himſelf to do this.

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Do thou go forth, O LORD, *with our fleets and our armies; and deliver us not a prey unto our enemies? for we do not preſent our ſupplications before thee, for our righteouſneſs, but for thy great mercies, thro' CHRIST JESUS our LORD.*